

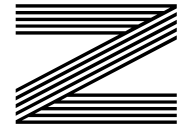
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Aston Martin runs on cheese and wine

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Crawley-born comedian celebrating 10 years on the circuit



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Editor's notes...

NOVEMBER 2021



Emma Caulfield, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**Halstead.

After being forced to navigate lockdown restrictions this time last year, we can (hopefully) now look forward to enjoying the party season.

By the time you read this, Halloween and Bonfire Night will be over, but with many of last year's events cancelled owing to the pandemic, this was a chance for us to enjoy our new-found freedom. Among the events was the spectacular Halstead Town FC fireworks night.

Since we've been cooped up for so long, with little to look forward to, we're eager to grasp any opportunity to go big with our celebrations, and

that's why I can't wait to see what Christmas will bring. Here's hoping we're able to meet up with friends and family face-to-face and enjoy time with our loved ones.

I'm also looking forward to attending the Christmas lights switch-on in Halstead on November 27, which will be a chance to get into the festive spirit alongside friends and neighbours.

Finally, all our thoughts are with the family and friends of Sir David Amess MP, who was killed during a meeting with his constituents last month. Sir David was a welcome contributor to **VISION**LeighThorpeBay magazine, and we will miss his kindness and dedication to his role.

Emma Caulfield

This is your town's hyperlocal magazine, delivering to homes and businesses every month.

HOME & DIY | GARDENING | PETS | HEALTH & FITNESS | BEAUTY | FASHION | HISTORY | LOCAL NEWS | FOOD & DRINK | TRAVEL | BUSINESS & PROPERTY | SPORT | PUZZLES | MOTORING | KIDS | WHAT'S ON | TECHNOLOGY | THE LISTINGS

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ASTON *marvelling*

HOW HRH PRINCE CHARLES, SOME LEFTOVER WINE AND A CONSTITUENT OF CHEESE ARE HELPING THE PURSUIT OF ECO TRAVEL

It's a fine line between innovation and eccentricity, but HRH Prince Charles appears to have landed the right side of it... just.

The Prince of Wales, who turned 73 in November and is first in line to the throne, has converted his cherished Aston Martin DB6 so that it can run on cheese waste and surplus white wine. His move to decarbonise fits perfectly with a modern revolution in motoring, where electric cars, the future ban of the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles, and various road taxes designed to keep gas-guzzlers out of our city centre spaces are giving our roads a green makeover.

Charles revealed in a recent interview that he was offered the conversion some time ago and did not hesitate to accept.

"I think when opportunities and ideas come your

way, you need to judge them on their own merits," he says.

"Certainly, where classic cars are concerned, there is the temptation to leave them as they are and not tinker with them, but if we all thought like that, we wouldn't make the strides we have, and the strides we need to."

It was Gloucestershire-based firm Green Fuels – the company has since earned a Royal Warrant of Appointment – which suggested it could supply bioethanol produced from a combination of wine and cheese (whey).

Blending the fuel then adding 15 per cent unleaded petrol meant the car was more powerful than before, yet significantly greener.

Of course, this isn't

the first time Prince Charles has taken the lead where green and eco matters are concerned. He established The Prince's Trust and The Prince's Rainforests Project and has always been a passionate advocate for initiatives that put the planet's needs first. He became the first member of the royal family to adopt electric cars for official duties in 2018, and has rallied behind his son William's successful efforts with The Earthshot Prize, with its £1million bounty awarded to fund solutions to help tackle climate change.

However, Charles believes there is much still to be done. He says the world's leaders are big on environmental talk, but rarely take the actions required to back up the platitudes.

"It is time for a lot of

people, influential people, to stand up and make real decisions," he says. "They have the expertise, they have the wherewithal and they have the resources, so there is no reason why we can't be moving forward much quicker than we are."

"Green initiatives in the past always seemed to come with some sort of cost or inconvenience. A lot of those I see today have no such thing – look at my DB6, it is a better vehicle than it was before."

The classic Aston Martin emerged in 1969 and has been one of Charles's true joys. He even enlisted the services of two-time Formula One world champion, Graham Hill, to teach him how to drive the car to its maximum potential.

He added: "It gives me great pleasure every time I drive it – and to know I can do that while limiting harm to the environment is a wonderful feeling."



Photo credit: David Hartley/Shutterstock

SUPER subscriptions

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

A gift isn't just for Christmas, so treat your loved ones to a subscription box this festive season and leave it to the postman to deliver the perfect package to your friend or family member's doorstep each month.

Flower and plant subscription service – If you have a green-fingered friend, what better gift than a new potted plant or bunch of flowers each month? Also suited to remote workers who could do with freshening up their home working environment. You can even find sustainable providers who only work with Fairtrade growers.

Cocktail subscription service – For your boozy bestie or a mum who loves a mojito, a cocktail subscription service makes the perfect gift. Depending on the service you select, the recipient can expect to receive ingredients and instructions to make a new cocktail each month.

Food subscription service – Whether you know someone who is a real foodie or your loved one could do with a helping hand in the kitchen, a weekly delivery of high-quality, fresh ingredients is just what they need. Choose the size of the box depending on how many people they cook for. Subscriptions are available to cater for all dietary requirements.

Gadget subscription service – Being a tech enthusiast can be expensive, but what if you could enable your gadget-loving friend to try out a new device every month? Pick between health and fitness gadgets, entertainment devices and even relationship tech.

Craft subscription service – If you are looking for a subscription service for children, then a monthly craft box is a great idea. With subscriptions available for all ages, you can find boxes that contain a range of fun science, technology, engineering, art and maths activities.

Other subscription services include...

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DULUX COLOUR OF THE YEAR

Bright Skies

OPEN YOUR EYES TO BRIGHT SKIES



HOME & DIY



It's perhaps peculiar that Dulux waits for the time of year when the summer skies begin to seep away, and the radiant, elegant blueness of those warm months is dissipating, to name its much-heralded Colour of the Year... as blue.

The reveal of Bright Skies as a shade that is set to transform our homes for the next 12 months coincides with an autumnal browning and greying of life outside our windows. Yet the paint expert's choice has been met with approval for its ability to extend our elevated, enlightened view on the year for just a little bit longer, as winter gradually approaches.

Dulux's choice has much to do with the brightness and optimism that is being felt in the wake of the end of lockdown. The brand speaks of uplift and progression, with the colour working as an alternative to the mass of light grey shades that have

been so prevalent in offices.

The ability of Bright Skies to blend with all manner of other tones makes it stand up to scrutiny. Its pastel essence draws in other colours instead of repelling them, so use it in living spaces, against light or medium woods, and even on ceilings. Alternatively, pick out the colour on cushions or fabrics.

In the kitchen, a Blue Skies splashback can offer incredible contrast to silver or copper pots and pans; while in the bathroom, ditching formal white for this breathless, brilliant blue will give 'big sky' thinking to every groggy winter morning.

Where, in the past, light blue could feel cold and frosty, particularly when temperatures begin to drop in the winter months, Dulux is asking us to view it from a new angle, accompanying it with textures and tones to help us decorate even the gloomiest of days with bright, sunny, uplifting moments.

Photo credit: dulux.co.uk



SOFA, *so good*



From striking shades to fabulous fluting, tactile textures to durable designs, these five sofa trends for 2022 are anything but boring.

Bold colours: Moving away from more muted shades such as grey and dark slate blue, 2022 sofas are unabashedly bold and beautiful. Think bright blue and ruby red, as well as more subdued, warm colours such as paprika. Keep your walls neutral and let your sofas do the talking.

Curves and fluting: A key sofa trend that emerged in 2020 and is still going strong as we move into 2022, expect to see more intricate pleating combined with chunky quilting for a cosy yet stylish look. For an added sense of luxury, opt for velvets that perfectly complement the curves of the flutes.

Raw materials: Arguably one of the biggest sofa trends for 2022, the appearance of sofas will become more natural and pared back as people strive to embrace a more simplistic lifestyle. Look out for heavy textures such as bouclé which add softness, and more earthy tones like rust and green that simply scream 'au naturel'.

Sustainability: With consumers becoming increasingly interested in how their goods are made and how it affects the world they live in, ethical sofa designs are becoming much more mainstream. From sofas that are made using 100 per cent recycled fabric to styles that are designed with durability in mind, it has never been easier to buy a stylish sofa that also helps to reduce your carbon footprint.

Mismatched sets: Say goodbye to three-piece suites and hello to more eclectic, mismatched sofa arrangements. With spaces in the home now needing to be both versatile and tactile, regimented furniture schemes are no longer relevant. Instead, embrace different shapes, sizes, colours and patterns in your living room.

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Fruit & Nut Bark – a great gift idea from

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Ingredients

75g cup walnuts
450g good white chocolate, finely chopped
75g dried cranberries
75g medium-diced dried apricot

Directions

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Using a pencil, draw an 8-by-10-inch rectangle on a piece of parchment paper.

Turn the parchment paper over so the pencil mark doesn't get onto the chocolate and place it on a sheet pan.

Place the walnuts in one layer on another sheet pan and bake for eight minutes. Set aside to cool.

Place three-quarters of the white chocolate in a heat-proof glass bowl and put it in the microwave on high for 30 seconds.

Stir the chocolate with a rubber spatula, return it to the microwave for another 30 seconds, then stir again. Continue to heat and stir in 30-second intervals until the chocolate is just melted.



Immediately stir in the remaining chocolate and allow it to sit at room temperature, stirring often, until it's completely smooth. (If you need to heat it a little more, place it in the microwave for another 15 seconds.)

Pour the melted chocolate onto the parchment paper and spread it lightly to fill the drawn rectangle.

Sprinkle the top evenly with the cooled walnuts, the cranberries and apricots. Press the nuts and fruit lightly so they will set in the chocolate.

Set aside for at least two hours until firm or refrigerate for 20 minutes. Cut or break the bark into 16 pieces and serve at room temperature.

Great as Christmas gifts – present in a small box or cellophane bag tied with a pretty ribbon.

Enjoy!

PS If you need me to clean your cooker before Christmas, please call me, Stephen Hall, OvenGleamers on 01787 852112



HOME & DIY

How to clean a COOKER HOOD FILTER

Can you remember the last time you checked underneath your cooker's hood to see if the exhaust fan filter needed a good clean? If it's been a while, we warn you, this is not going to be a pretty sight.

Fortunately, you can get your filter looking squeaky clean and grease-free in just eight simple steps.

WHAT YOU NEED:

Boiling water | Washing-up liquid | Baking soda | A non-abrasive scrubbing brush | Paper towels or a tea towel

HOW TO CLEAN:

- > **Step 1: REMOVE THE FILTER FROM THE HOOD**
The filter should easily slide or pop out from underneath the hood.
- > **Step 2: FILL A BUCKET WITH BOILING WATER**
You can use hot water from the tap, but boiling water is more effective.
- > **Step 3: ADD BAKING SODA AND WASHING-UP LIQUID**
Pour ¼ cup of baking soda and a good squirt

of washing up liquid into your bucket of boiling water and swirl around with a brush. Be careful not to place your hands directly into the water, to prevent burns.

- > **Step 4: SUBMERGE YOUR FILTER IN THE WATER**
Make sure the filter is completely covered by the boiling water.
- > **Step 5: LEAVE IT TO SOAK**
Allow the filter to soak for a minimum of 10 minutes, longer if possible.
- > **Step 6: SCRUB THE FILTER**
Once the filter has finished soaking, take it out of the water and scrub with a non-abrasive brush. Add more washing-up liquid to your brush if needed.
- > **Step 7: RINSE AND DRY YOUR FILTER**
Rinse the filter in hot water and dry with paper towels or a tea towel.
- > **Step 8: REPLACE THE FILTER**
Put the clean filter back into the hood and repeat as and when needed. It is recommended to clean your hood filter once a month to keep it working properly.



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LITTLE BIG BELL

ARE YOU IN NEED OF A COLOUR BOOST IN YOUR INTERIORS? LOOK TO BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL BLOG **LITTLE BIG BELL**

The world can be a little bleak sometimes; the last year has shown us that. Therefore, it's refreshing when a ray of sunshine comes into our lives that lifts our spirits and puts a smile on our faces. And that ray of sunshine is Little Big Bell.

Little Big Bell is the interiors blog of Dr Geraldine Tan, whose passion for design is clear to see. Little Big Bell is where Geraldine shares her incredible style, but by day, she's an NHS doctor based in London.

So what makes Little Big Bell's style so popular, and how can you get the look in your own home? Some of the most popular interiors trends at the moment favour muted colours and neutrals – a classic choice, but not everyone's cup of tea. So it's exciting to stumble across a style like Geraldine's. It's fresh, colourful and full of beautiful ideas. Her style is like pop art brought to life, and it's impossible not to smile when you browse through her incredible photos.

HOW TO STYLE YOUR HOME THE LITTLE BIG BELL WAY

- Don't be afraid of colour. Geraldine uses all the colours of the rainbow for her interiors, creating a look that's light, energetic and so much fun.
- Use bold prints to brighten up your walls. Even if you're not confident enough to go for full-on colour, prints can be a subtle way to add colour to the most neutral of spaces.
- Go for the mix and match approach. Not everything has to be matchy-matchy – mix up your accessories to create a more interesting look. Geraldine's kitchen is the perfect example of how different types of vases and dinnerware can complement each other, even when they're all different. Using display cabinets can add colour and interest in your kitchen.
- Geraldine uses accessories such as cushions and rugs to inject some colour while bringing looks together. She uses cushions of the same shape and size in different colour and pattern variations, as well as rugs with complementary colours and patterns, to create a look that is cute and colourful but doesn't look over-the-top or gauche.
- In the bedrooms, Geraldine mixes muted colours with bolder hues that keep the room looking airy and spacious. A colour block wall is all you need as a starting point, and you can add furniture and accessories in different colours to create a similar look.
- Many people shy away from colour in the bathroom, but Geraldine's style provides the perfect inspiration for how pastel shades can make your bathroom look fun and interesting – a space that makes getting ready for the day all the more enjoyable.



Photo credit: littlebigbell.com

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS



Care home receives Home from Home Award

Halstead care home has won an award recognising the commitment and hard work of its staff.

Staff at Blackthorns Care Home said they were "honoured" to win Runwood Homes' Home from Home Award.

Runwood Homes recently launched its internal awards to honour teams that have come up with novel methods to improve the environment in which residents live.

The award was based on several factors, including how well teams implemented ideas, practices and processes, as well as overall presentation.

Home manager, Teresa Franze, said: "We are honoured that the company has bestowed upon us

this award recognising the commitment and the hard work of Blackthorns staff in the past year. We are humbled, yet we rejoice that our efforts have made a difference in the lives of our residents.

"It has a special meaning to us all because we are coming out of an unprecedented pandemic, which has seen the team coming together, day in and day out, dedicated to residents' wellbeing in all aspects of their lives.

"I want to thank each one of my staff for their total commitment and care towards the residents and the home. It has been an extraordinary journey with many obstacles on the way, but with faith and endurance, together we have overcome."



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Excellent



Halstead Town Football Club continue winning streak

With four wins in a row, Halstead Town Football Club have lifted themselves to the second spot in the league, just two points behind the leaders, Ipswich Wanderers.

This rise up the table followed some excellent displays of attacking football, the most notable being a 5-0 victory. Halstead are now the top scorers in the league, with 76 goals from 16 matches.

Chris Harris (pictured left) is worthy of a mention, with his hat-trick of goals in a club record of just eight minutes against Haverhill Borough. Alfie Cleal (pictured centre), who has hit the net six times in his last five games, has also impressed.

The recently formed Halstead women's team have

now begun their league season. The first couple of games didn't go their way, but they were successful at the third attempt with a 5-0 win against Broomfield Ladies. Hannah Ellis (pictured right) was voted player of the match for this game.

The women's team would still like some additional players, and anyone interested in joining is welcome to attend the friendly training sessions on Monday evenings at 8pm at Halstead Leisure Centre.

Off the pitch, some popular functions are regularly held in the refurbished clubhouse at Rosemary Lane, with Colchester-based band, 24 Karat, playing on Saturday, November 13. Tickets cost £10 and can be obtained from Gary Jones by calling 07754 763322.

Torchlight procession and carol service return

Halstead Town Council is pleased to announce the return of the annual torchlight and carol service next month.

All are invited to the festive event on Wednesday, December 1, starting at the top of the High Street.

Members of the public will carry flaming torches and glowsticks for younger people, which are provided for free by Halstead Town Council, to create a magnificent display.

There will be a blessing of the crib around the Christmas tree on Market Hill, followed by a parade along High Street, Bridge Street and Trinity Street, finishing at Halstead Public Gardens for the annual carol service.

The service, beginning at 7.30pm, will be led by Churches Together in Halstead and will be accompanied by the Salvation Army band.

A spokesperson for Halstead Town Council said: "Detailed plans have been prepared; Father Christmas has been informed. The cadets' marching band and the Salvation Army band are preparing to play for the torchlight procession and carols."



LOCAL NEWS



Runners participate in marathon to support hospice

A woman from Halstead, along with a team of runners and walkers from Essex, completed the London Marathon and Virtual London Marathon on Sunday, October 3, for charity, St Clare Hospice.

Nine of the team took on the 26.2-mile route around the city, while two ran the distance around Harlow and one walked it around Halstead.

They managed to raise more than £20,000 for St Clare Hospice.

Virtual Marathon participant, Lorna-Rae Brown, who completed her marathon around Halstead, said afterwards: "It was an honour to walk the virtual marathon and raise money for St Clare Hospice. £1,000 raised so far. Thanks to everyone who sponsored and sent kind wishes."

St Clare Hospice challenges and events fundraiser,

Dani De'ath, said: "I'm the proudest challenges and events fundraiser to have had 14 runners who all competed the London Marathon with smiles on their faces, covering more than 350 miles between them. Some have waited since 2019 to run this moment; some ran in London, others in Essex, but all were amazing."

Dani added: "We'd like to thank everyone who helped to raise money for our hospice through the London Marathon 2021, including everyone who donated and sponsored a runner. Your support is absolutely invaluable to us and allows us to care for people and their families each and every day."

For further information on how to fundraise for St Clare Hospice, contact Dani De'ath on 01279 773738 or fund@stclarehospice.org.uk

Man arrested on suspicion of harassment

A man has been arrested on suspicion of harassment following several incidents in Halstead High Street.

Police received a number of reports between October 3 and October 14.

A 40-year-old man from Halstead has now been arrested.

Essex Police had appealed for information concerning a man they wanted to speak to in connection with the investigation.

He remains in custody for questioning.

Officers are not looking for anyone else in connection with the investigation and they do not believe there is any wider threat to the community.



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Charity offers grants to students and schools



A local charity is offering grants to help students succeed in their studies.

The Earls Colne and Halstead Educational Charity (EChEC) is offering the grants to individuals, schools and local voluntary groups in the hope that this will create opportunities for individuals to learn or build on existing skills, grow in confidence and be able to succeed to the best of their ability.

Non-means-tested book and equipment grants are offered to those undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses.

Individual applicants must be aged five to 25 and have lived or attended school in the benefit area for a minimum of 12 months to be eligible for a grant.

For further details regarding eligibility or an application form, visit www.echec.org.uk

Police issue witness appeal following 'serious collision'

Essex Police are appealing for witnesses and dashcam footage following a serious collision.

The incident took place at 3.15pm on Monday, November 1 on Trinity Street, Halstead, and involved a pedestrian and a car.

A man has been taken to hospital with serious injuries.

No arrests have been made.

Anyone who witnessed the incident or has dashcam footage should submit a report online at www.essex.police.uk or use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am-11pm.

You can also call the non-emergency number 101 and cite incident 723 of November 1.

Information can be given anonymously to independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or crimestoppers-uk.org

Essex Police aim to eradicate hate crime

Following an increase in hate crimes in the county, Essex Police Superintendent Richard Melton has said hate crime will not be tolerated.

There have been more than 4,800 hate crime offences in Essex in 2021, up by 27 per cent on this time last year.

A hate crime is any act motivated by animosity or prejudice against a person based on their disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Supt Melton encourages Halstead residents to report incidents and has assured victims that the police are working with the Crown Prosecution Service to achieve better outcomes.

Essex Police has three full-time hate crime officers who support the community policing teams. They are also one of only 12 forces to record whether hate offences were motivated by gender or sex.

A police LGBTQ+ network committee member, Victoria Matthews, and her partner have both been assaulted because of their sexuality.

She said: "My partner has been beaten up for being who she is. I've had people shout 'lesbian' at me and be funny with me in clubs."

Victoria says that changes in the education system and the information available at Pride events have made people in the LGBTQ+ community more aware of their rights.

To report a hate crime, visit www.essex.police.uk and search 'hate crime'.





PETS

Peculiar PET LAWS



We are a nation of pet lovers, so we think you need to know about the following pet laws in the UK. Some are common sense, some are a bit weird, and others are just plain hilarious.

1. NOT HAVING POO BAGS

In Daventry, Northamptonshire, you can be issued a £100 fine for not having a spare poo bag, regardless of whether your dog has fouled or not.

2. BURYING YOUR PET IN THE WRONG PLACE

It is illegal to bury your pet anywhere other than the grounds of the home that they lived in. You need to own your home, not just rent it. If you plan to sell, it is not a legal requirement to tell buyers about the burial, but you may want to mention it as a courtesy.

3. NOT SECURING YOUR PET WHEN DRIVING

You can be fined up to £5,000 and have your insurance invalidated if you fail to buckle up your pet when driving. This law applies to all pets, as not only can they act as a distraction, but their wellbeing is also at risk without suitable restraint.

4. RIDING A HORSE OR CATTLE WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Everyone knows it's illegal to drink and drive, but did you know that this law extends to horses? Yes, under the Licensing Act 1872, it is illegal to be drunk and in charge on any highway or other public place of any carriage, horse or cattle.

5. MATING WITH A ROYAL DOG

Although we admit this scenario is unlikely, if you do stumble upon one of Her Majesty's corgis while walking your dog, it is illegal for your pet to mate with it without seeking permission first.

OTHER UNUSUAL PET LAWS IN THE UK:

- > You are not allowed a pigsty in front of your house unless it is appropriately hidden
- > It is illegal to run cows through the street during the daytime, although after 7pm is fine
- > In the Lancashire coast area, it is illegal to encourage your dog to bark.



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ROMESH RANGANATHAN

CELEBRATES 10 YEARS ON THE COMEDY CIRCUIT

Romesh Ranganathan is evidence personified that it's never too late to change direction in life. The 43 year old is a regular on the live circuit, on chat and panel shows and, from the end of this year, will take on the role of host of *The Weakest Link*. He is vastly experienced, wholly respected and has within his armoury the poise and potential to become one of this generation's stars of modern entertainment.

And yet, little more than 10 years ago, the Crawley-born-and-raised comedian was still a maths teacher. While his stock on the stand-up circuit was rising all the time, Ranganathan was another year away from turning professional. Instead, he was teaching at The Beacon School in Banbury and Hazelwick School in his home town, where he was once a student.

Indeed, Romesh – real name Jonathan – owes a lot to the West Sussex town. Rarely has Crawley found itself so namechecked in popular culture, yet Ranganathan has a peculiar affinity with it.

"I've just never seen the point in leaving," he says. "It's where I grew up, it's where my family are, it has a League Two football team. What more can you really ask for?"

The dad-of-three also launched a career as a rapper, under the name Ranga, and made it all the way to the finals of a UK freestyle competition.

The double BAFTA-winning star of his own series *The Ranganation*, *The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan* and *The Reluctant Landlord*, to name but three, Romesh's appeal is in his irreverent, somewhat sneering take on the world. In a world of increasing wokery, he's unafraid to examine and celebrate racial and societal differences, always with an undercurrent of self-deprecation.

Yet this is nothing new, nor an act. At school, he was the same, happy to deliver put-downs (or "slap downs" as he would call them), yet just as willing to accept them back from classmates.

"We've got to be able to take the mickey out of ourselves first and foremost," he says. "I think when you meet people who do that, you realise that the conversation is only ever going to be good."

"I often tell people who are easily offended not to come to my gigs. I don't set out to insult people, but I will highlight our failings as human beings – all of us."

"We need to get away from this veil of perfection, or the insinuation that if anyone pokes fun at us they must be racist or sexist or mentally damaged."

"I want us all to get back to having a laugh at ourselves and each other – I'm like a schizophrenic, Asian Jerry Springer. We should all have a set of put-downs ready to fire off at any moment."

There appears little danger that Romesh's refreshing brand of comedy is going to fall by the wayside. As he prepares to celebrate a decade in his entertainment career, his first move into quiz show hosting is an interesting diversion, with *The Weakest Link* returning to our screens after a 10-year absence.

"Obviously I've done stuff like *8 out of 10 Cats* and a couple of one-off projects such as *Have I Got News for You*, but this is the big one," he says. "I'm watching old shows with Anne Robinson wondering how I can possibly emulate this institution of TV."

"She's certainly much better than me at put-downs."

ARE YOU
HAVING
A
LAUGH

HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR

Christmas shop

FOOD & DRINK

While you may have had the best intentions to save all year for Christmas, unfortunately, real life often scuppers our plans. If you haven't yet managed to put aside some extra cash for your Christmas food shop, the below tips will help you to save big on all those tasty festive treats.

STOCK UP EARLY

Rather than leaving everything to the last minute, why not start stocking up on items such as chocolates, savoury snacks and Christmas liqueurs from now and spread the cost of your food shop over two months rather than one?

GET SOCIAL

If you have a few favourite food brands, now is the perfect time to start following them on social media so that you can pounce on any early Christmas offers as soon as they become available. Don't forget to also sign up to their email newsletters for possible discounts.

MAKE YOUR OWN

While some items are cheaper to buy in store – such as a Christmas pudding, which can be purchased for as little as 99p – there are some foods that are cheaper to make yourself. These include canapés, side dishes such as pigs in blankets, and even mince pies.

SHARE THE BURDEN

If you are hosting Christmas dinner this year and are concerned about the cost, there is no reason why you shouldn't ask family members to help out. Rather than demand cash, ask each person to bring a different dish or drink.

USE COMPARISON SITES

Simply type into Google 'cheapest supermarket for your Christmas food shop' and you will be met with a whole host of sources that can save you money. Compare turkey costs, Christmas pudding prices, and so much more. Plus, find out about home delivery and click-and-collect slots.



Whispers

Christmas Menu

**Christmas Menu for 2 people
£55 per person**

1 Bottle of Prosecco or Bottle of Wine

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Basket of Bread
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Main Course
Turkey Fillet served with Pigs In Blankets,
Sautéed Potatoes, Yorkshire Pudding, Sautéed Vegetables,
Gravy and Cranberry Sauce
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Mushroom and Asparagus Risotto

Dessert
Crème Brûlée or Chocolate Mousse Tart
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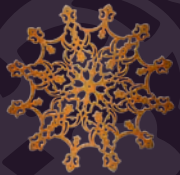
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PARK LIFE



TRAVEL

Made famous by Disney World, Orlando is much more than that – it's the theme park capital of the world, bringing in more than 75 million holidaymakers each year. Here's our five-day guide to the ultimate thrill-seeker vacation:

DAY 1 – UNIVERSAL ORLANDO – Most people migrate towards Universal Orlando, one of the biggest theme parks in the world. Here, it's all action, adventure and showbiz, with rides and attractions focused on your favourite TV shows and movies.

DAY 2 – ISLANDS OF ADVENTURE – Universal's Islands of Adventure Theme Park – with combined tickets available for around £275 per person – showcases Hogsmeade and Diagon Alley (connected by a ride on the Hogwarts Express), plus everything from *Jurassic Park* to the Hulk. The £265million project is an escape among beloved fantasy characters.

DAY 3 – LEGOLAND/DISCOVERY COVE – This one depends on whether you're a bit of a daredevil or more the chilled-out type. If you're the latter, a semi-rest day at Legoland with the familiarity of some block brilliance is probably the way to go.

Thrill-seekers may prefer Discovery Cove, where diving, snorkeling and sub-aqua pursuits invite visitors to literally immerse themselves in the action.

DAY 4 – MAGIC KINGDOM PARK – Yes, Orlando is more than Disney World, but that doesn't mean its aptly named Magic Kingdom should be ignored. The theme park, which has more than 40 attractions, is divided into six themed lands, each with a different focus, but all catering to visitors of any age. After arriving at the park by your choice of ferry or monorail, you'll stroll through the gates into Main Street, USA. From there, the majestic land is your oyster – just be sure to head back to Main Street for the iconic fireworks display.

DAY 5 – BUSCH GARDENS – Finally, wrap things up with a trip to Tampa, 90 minutes away. Busch Gardens is a safari wonderland that feels straight out of Africa, yet with that unique Florida twist. It's bigger, better and more pumped up than any animal park you've been to before, with plentiful rollercoasters and rides.

DURATION – Park-to-park passes are available from some agents and can save you money as well as helping you stay organised. Rest time is recommended, as long days in the parks can be tiring.

WHERE TO STAY – Downtown Orlando is a good place to base yourself, combining great hotels with nightlife and shopping. It's also safe, making it suitable for families.

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BRUCE KING

on how to sell yourself and what you do



Sales mentor and personal growth coach, Bruce King, begins an exclusive monthly column designed to help you organise, improve and maximise everyday life.

It's often said that people do business with people they like and trust, and that's most certainly true.

Let's face it, if you look scruffy and unprofessional, have poor body language, won't make eye contact and look suspicious, it's unlikely anyone will want to talk about doing business with you.

But if you do exhibit any of those characteristics and you want to sell something to somebody, those are fairly easy to fix.

From there on, successful selling is nothing about you personally. In fact, most people have no interest in you whatsoever. The only thing they really care about is what the product or service you are selling can do for them.

Let's focus on what you sell and how to sell it. Here's a definition of selling I wrote many years ago: selling is the process of identifying problems

individuals and companies are suffering from – some of which they may not have known existed – and opportunities they could exploit, and showing them how your product or service can help them solve the problems and take advantage of the opportunities.

Therefore, we need to ask as many questions as possible to identify those problems and opportunities before presenting our products and services.

Even if they come to you with a problem and ask you to solve it, still question them further. It's likely you can discover other problems and be of even greater benefit to them.

This is called consultative selling. It's the best and easiest way to sell.

More information:

Bruce King is recognised internationally as a leading sales, marketing and personal growth strategist, addressing audiences and coaching sales teams and managers in 23 countries. For more information, visit bruceking.co.uk

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Hairband

HEROES



BEAUTY



Does your hair always fall out when you tie it up? Or perhaps you spend more time detangling your locks than enjoying your updo? If the answer is yes, you could be using the wrong hairband for your hair type.

For thin hair

Thin hair that is prone to breakage needs a hairband that is gentle on your delicate locks. Opt for a silk hairband that will protect your hair and help to keep flyaway strands in check. When removing a silk hairband, you should notice significantly less pulling on the roots.

For thick hair

If you have thick hair, you are likely to experience both tangles and a struggle to keep your voluminous hair contained. Look for spiral plastic hairbands that are specifically designed for thick heads of hair, as these are easy to use and remove without your hair becoming tangled in the tie.

For wavy hair

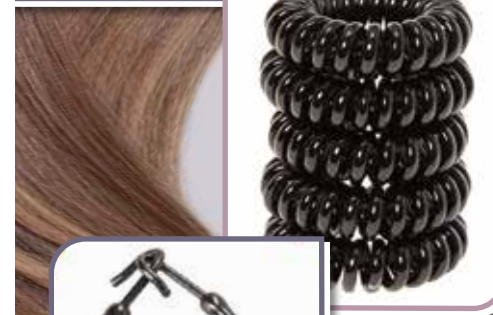
Do you feel like no hairband can hold back your big mane of wavy hair? Forget elastic bands and scrunchies and, instead, invest in a hair bungee. Boasting a hook on each end, a hair bungee can be easily wrapped around your hair to keep it in place all day.

For short hair

People with short hairstyles are always going to struggle to pulling their hair back into a ponytail. However, there is a solution. Polybands are great at gripping short hair and staying in place. Small and often clear, they will simply disappear into your hairstyle.

For straightened hair

Bringing back a blast from the past, if you want to tie your straightened hair back without causing kinks, you need a scrunchie. These hairbands work best directly after a blow-dry to help maintain a smooth and straight look. However, they are also effective at keeping your hair in place while you sleep.





Self-care

is not selfish

To celebrate National Spa Week, which takes place from November 4-9, we thought we would share with you our top self-care practices that promise to leave you feeling physically and mentally rejuvenated. Plus, discover why you need to make time for self-care.

What is self-care?

While many believe that self-care is self-indulgent or even selfish, it is in fact a crucial process that allows you to tend to your physical and emotional needs. Essentially, it involves making the time to take care of yourself.

There are said to be eight main areas of self-care that you should focus on:

- Physical | Psychological | Emotional | Social | Professional | Environmental | Spiritual | Financial

What are the mental health benefits of self-care?

According to recent data from the Office for National Statistics, depression rates have doubled during the COVID-19 pandemic, with concerns growing over a nationwide mental health crisis.

When it comes to looking after your mental health, self-care has the unique ability to:

- > Manage your stress levels
- > Lower your risk of mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression
- > Increase your overall energy levels
- > Boost your self-esteem
- > Improve your relationships.

Ten simple ways to practise self-care

1. Get a good night's sleep – ideally between seven and eight hours per night.
2. Drinks lots of water – up to eight glasses a day.
3. Go for a daily brisk walk – at least 30 minutes.
4. Take a relaxing bath using essential oils.
5. Say no to something you don't have time to do or don't want to do.
6. Listen to your favourite music.
7. Watch your favourite film.
8. Indulge in a massage.
9. Make something healthy and delicious for dinner.
10. Make a list of five things you like about yourself.

If you are struggling with your mental health, there are several UK charities that can help, including Mind and YoungMinds, which is aimed at children, young people and their parents. To find out more, visit www.mind.org.uk or www.youngminds.org.uk



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Headstart For Happiness



Our thoughts are not simply fleeting pieces of information that enter our minds and then disappear. The words and ideas that we think push us toward success and happiness or failure and distress. How you think and feel can have a significant effect on your ability to recognise opportunity, how well you perform, and the outcome of the goals that you've set for yourself.

When you maintain an optimistic outlook, you begin to create the circumstances for you to achieve what you desire. You feel in control and few of life's challenges seem truly overwhelming because it is in your nature to expect a positive outcome.

Staying positive does not mean that you ignore difficulties or disregard situations. It means that when something difficult or unpleasant arises, you look

for the opportunity within, after acknowledging that you'll need some resilience to get through the tough time. 'Toxic positivity' – that's being positive all the time regardless – is harmful and doesn't serve you (or others you inflict it upon). A "good vibes only!" approach is not fully experiencing the human condition.

Positive thinking dramatically increases your chances of success in any endeavour. When you know that you're worthy and that achievement is within your reach, you relax and look for solutions rather than focussing on problems. What the mind expects, it finds. If you anticipate joy and success, then you will experience this.

Whenever a negative thought enters your mind, try immediately replacing it with a constructive or optimistic one. With training

and practice, you can condition your mind to judge fleeting, self-defeating thoughts as inconsequential and dismiss them.

It is within your power to become as happy, content, or successful as you make up your mind to be. Staying positive may not have an immediate effect on your situation, but it will likely have a profound and instantaneous effect on your mood and the quality of your experiences.

In order for positive thinking to change your life, it must become your predominant mind-set. Once you are committed to embracing positive thinking, you'll start believing that everything that you want is within your grasp.

Helen Reade is a certified Positive Psychology practitioner & PQ Coach



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Odd Socks

THE LATEST FOOTWEAR TREND

Who says that your socks have to match? Showcase what makes you unique and support Anti-Bullying Week 2021 by rocking odd socks on November 15 and beyond.

No longer a fashion faux pas, odd socks may be brazen and bold, but they can also be chic and stylish.

WHAT IS ODD SOCKS DAY?

Launched in 2017, Odd Socks Day was created to deter bullying in schools. With the aim of showing children that it is okay to stand out from the crowd and to embrace what makes you different, children and adults alike are being asked to rock odd socks and to appreciate the odd socks worn by others.

HOW TO CELEBRATE ODD SOCKS DAY

Wear your oddest pair of socks. These can be colourful and bright, mismatched or have a wacky pattern. Be sure to wear them proudly and invite your friends and family to join you in your support against bullying.

HOW TO WEAR ODD SOCKS

Seen on the likes of Ant and Dec, Emma Willis and

Craig David, there are many different ways to wear this fun and frivolous trend. Check out the below top tips which should help you rock this look with confidence:

- > Embrace bold colours and prints
- > Don't be afraid to wear your odd socks with sandals or sliders
- > Wear long odd socks pulled up to your knees with boots and a statement skirt
- > Mix stripes and spots
- > Layer up two pairs of socks with two different colours, one on top of the other
- > Pair neon socks with white trainers
- > Wear clashing colours with skyscraper heels.

POST YOUR SOCKS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Boost awareness by posting photos of your odd socks on social media with the hashtags #OddSocks and #AntiBullyingWeek.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ANTI-BULLYING CAMPAIGNS

To find out more, explore the many online resources on anti-bullying at www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk and share your knowledge with others.



FASHION



Following last month's article on "How to build a raised bed garden", in this edition we are going to show you how to turn your raised bed into a cold frame. Ideal for hardening off seedlings, growing cool-weather crops and protecting tender perennials, a cold frame can extend your gardening season well into the winter months.

WHAT IS A COLD FRAME?

Essentially, a cold frame is a removable glass or plastic-covered frame that fits over the ground or over a raised bed garden. It is predominantly used to protect plants from the elements by keeping them warm using natural heat sources.

HOW TO ADD A COLD FRAME TO A RAISED BED

- > **Step 1:** Find a salvaged window frame that is roughly the same size as your raised bed. If it is slightly bigger, this is fine, but it cannot be smaller. Wooden frames work best as these provide ample space to affix the hinges.
- > **Step 2:** Drill holes into the window frame and the edge of the raised bed to match the holes on the hinge. Affix either one large hinge or two smaller hinges to the edge.

- > **Step 3:** Affix a handle to the opposite edge so that you can easily open and close the frame. You can find handles for this in your local kitchen design department.

TOP TIPS:

- > Choose a salvaged window that has small panes rather than one large pane if possible, as these are less likely to break.
- > Regularly check your cold frame over winter. If it snows, remove any build-up of snow straight away.
- > Keep a brick or stick nearby for hot days so that you can prop the lid open and prevent your plants from becoming overheated.
- > Remember to water your plants as they will not receive any rainwater.



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Electric dream

LEGISLATION ANNOUNCED TO HAVE CHARGING POINTS IN ALL NEW BUILDS

The UK government recently cemented legislation that will make our rapid adoption of electric and hybrid cars all the more attractive, with new builds now bound by law to provide electric charging points for vehicles.

While the charging of a car by use of a lead from a ground-floor home or office is straightforward, the government realises access is more complicated for those living in flats or working in office blocks with no private charging point access. As a result, it is moving forward with the Department of Transport's guidance that states any new work or residential construction projects must have built-in charging points. These directives could come into force as early as 2022.

As it stands, there are almost 26,000 electric charging points in the UK. Yet the number of electric and hybrid cars on our roads is doubling every six

months and an estimated 10 times the number of current charging points will be required by 2030, the target date for when petrol and diesel cars will stop being sold in the UK.

In the UK, the cost of charging an electric car from flat battery to full is around £7 (depending on your supplier). For an average vehicle, this would produce a range of around 180 miles. The equivalent petrol or diesel cost would be around two and a half times that amount.

Despite the challenges ahead, the UK is still one of the countries leading the way in the adoption of electric cars. As well as a rapid increase in charger provision, it is investigating moves to make night-time charging a preferred option for cars – this will ensure users don't overload the grid, and also means they can take advantage of cheaper electricity prices.



MOTORING

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TIME TO APPLY
for schools

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN
APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL PLACE

Applying for a school place can be a stressful time for parents, filled with worry and apprehension. While the criteria will be different depending on whether you're looking for a primary or a secondary school, what should remain the same are the checks and investigations you undertake before cementing your choices.

CHECK OFSTED RATINGS: Ofsted ratings exist to help schools to improve, while also enabling parents a full view of what level an institution is at. Although inspections are irregular, reports are always full and detailed and often provide a good read, so check them out.

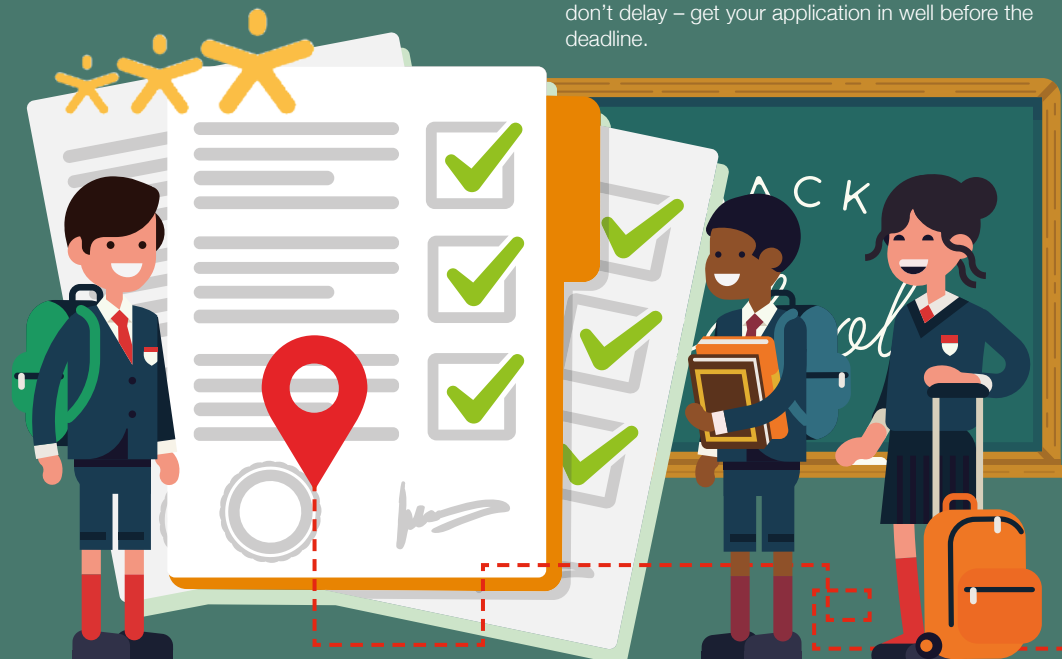
CHECK YOUR SCHOOL RUN: Have a look at the distance and route your child will be taking to school each day – is it practical, are there any hazards, does it fit in with your other morning commitments? Remember, for primary school children, proximity is the lead criteria.

CHECK NUMBERS: Being realistic about getting a place also means knowing the school's capacity, so have a look at last year's intake figures in order to give you a better idea of success rates.

SPEAK TO PARENTS: There's nothing quite like the experience of others, so chat to people locally whose kids already attend and gain a first-hand picture of what the school is really like.

CONSIDER SECOND CHOICES: If the worst thing happens and, for whatever reason, you don't land your first choice, look at and imagine your child attending an alternative school. Consider the positives, embrace the opportunity to go somewhere different and convey any optimism you have to your child – it will be vital should things not go to plan.

DO NOT BE LATE: Applying for a school place is essential parenting, so when the process opens, don't delay – get your application in well before the deadline.



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Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

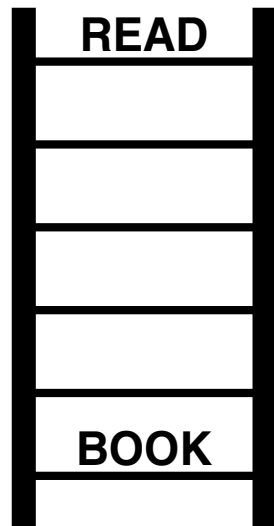
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- ▶ The acronym ISS stands for International Space Station
- ▶ Before applying to be an astronaut, a pilot must have completed 1,000 hours of flying time in a jet aircraft
- ▶ Neil Armstrong was the first human to walk on the surface of the moon
- ▶ According to NASA, the Space Shuttle travels around 17,600 miles per hour when orbiting the earth
- ▶ Most of the elements found in the human body originated in stars that have gone supernova
- ▶ The Space Shuttle makes one complete orbit around the earth approximately every 90 minutes
- ▶ Alan Shepard hit a golf ball on the moon during the Apollo 14 mission

WORD LADDER



THE AIM: Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

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DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

TIP: There is usually more than one way to solve this puzzle.

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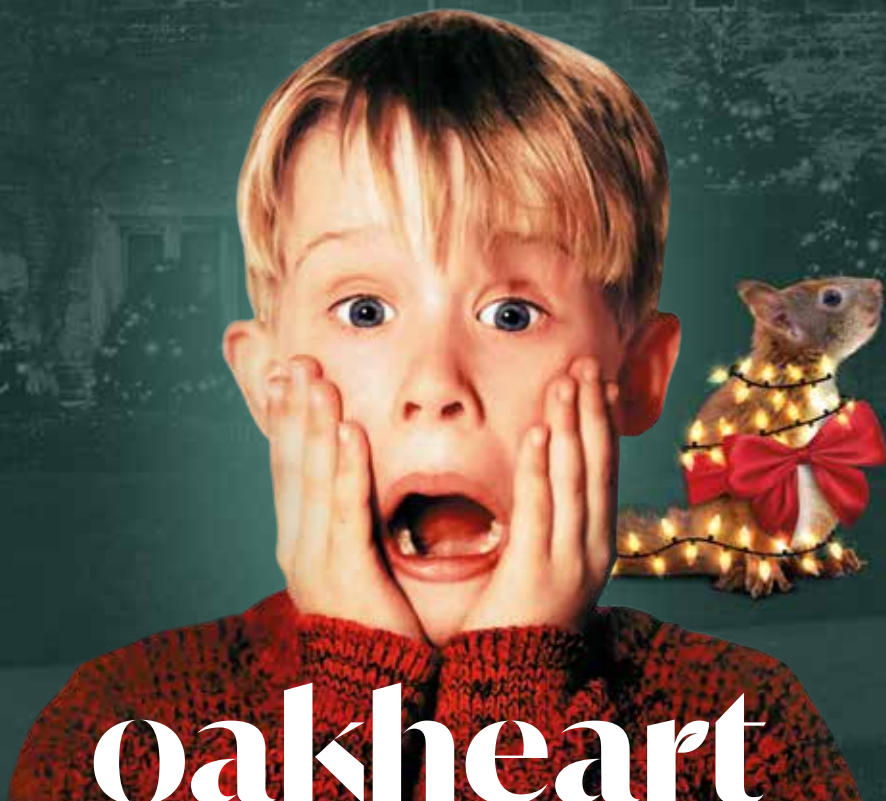
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